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Date: February 15, 2005

To: California Watershed Program Stakeholders and Interested Parties

From: Mike Chrisman, Secretary for Resources  
Alan Lloyd, Secretary for Environmental Protection

The Resources Agency and California Environmental Protection Agency have revised the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was required by the Watershed, Clean Beaches, and Water Quality Act (Statutes of 2002, Chapter 727, AB 2534, Pavley). The MOU was intended to establish a program for integrated watershed management and to provide for stakeholder input.

The revised MOU combines these objectives with the draft "California Agency Watershed Management Strategic Plan" and with related initiatives from the Governor's Environmental Action Plan. We have directed our departments, boards, commissions, conservancies and offices to implement these objectives through existing interagency programs or regional projects that include watershed protection goals and that provide opportunities for stakeholder input. This will provide more on-the-ground opportunities to demonstrate program integration and efficiencies, leveraged investments, and improvements in watershed health.

Given declining budgets and staff, we feel that the revised MOU provides a cost-effective way to build on the work of the former California Watershed Council. The Resources Agency and CalEPA would like to thank all those people, agencies and organizations that participated in the council. We appreciate the time and resources they contributed, and have made their activities and accomplishments available online at the California Watershed Portal ([http://cwp.resources.ca.gov/cwc\\_about.html](http://cwp.resources.ca.gov/cwc_about.html)) for your use. Many council concerns are reflected in the revised MOU and the strategic plan. Our departments, boards, commissions, conservancies and offices will also consider the council's final recommendations as they move forward.

Implementation of the MOU and strategic plan will entail the following activities:

- 1) Work together and with the public to design the Integrated Watershed Management Grants Program (Proposition 40) and to coordinate it with other programs, as required by statute;
- 2) Use a stakeholder advisory processes to assist in setting priorities for funding allocations for grant programs, holding joint stakeholder processes across agencies for programs with common or overlapping objectives;

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- 3) Identify priorities in the draft California Agency Watershed Management Strategic Plan, develop an 18 month action plan to implement them by March 2005, and provide performance measures by June 2005;
- 4) Make sure the plan addresses coordination or improvement of monitoring and information programs to demonstrate improvements to watershed health;
- 5) Implement the action plan where possible through regional or local interagency efforts that already include watershed protection objectives, such as CalFed, the Ocean Program, Southern California Wetlands Recovery Projects or others.

We will make a presentation on the action plan at the first meeting of the Ocean Protection Council in March. We will also review annual progress with state, local and federal agency partners, stakeholder groups and the public.

Now, more than ever, we must make sure that we work as strategically as possible in partnerships with all stakeholders and levels of government to restore, protect and manage California's watersheds for the long term.